



STATE SENATOR
BRUCE PATTERSON
IN THE LOOP ★

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6/28/05

Budget

The Senate is in full swing with budget negotiations. All of the budgets have been passed by the Senate and now go to the House for consideration. Senate Republicans are making sure each department is living within its means, while still continuing to provide and improve education, public services, cultural opportunities and transportation, among others. The House has taken a different approach to budgeting this year, so the reconciliation procedure between the two Chambers will be a new challenge.

Ban on Internet 'hunting' moves forward

Three bills have moved swiftly forward in the Senate and House to ban the use of computers to aim and fire weapons at caged animals. SB 620 is sponsored by Sen. Patterson. "Our great traditions of hunting are violated by this appalling abuse of technology," he said. SB 373 and HB 4465 are companion bills. "Michigan hunters take our sport seriously," said Sen. Patterson. "Activities like this are a disgrace to those of us who proudly call ourselves sportsmen."

Proposed Transportation budget contains help at two district intersections

Two intersections that have a history of trouble should get signalization, if they escape "the budget ax" this year. Sen. Patterson again added a budget amendment to direct MDOT to install signals at King and Telegraph (US 24) in Brownstown Township, and on Ann Arbor Road at McClumpha Rd., in Plymouth Township. "Signals can make the difference between life and death; so we cannot afford to be penny-wise and pound-foolish" about these two intersections. Last fall, a rollover accident involved some children. It is important that those concerned with this funding make their wishes known to the governor, who has line-item vetoes this same provision in the past, citing budget constraints.

Dr. Audrey Zavodsky honored by Senate

Racing enthusiasts will know the name of Dr. Audrey Zavodsky as Visteon's NASCAR driver. The Huron Township resident is also a nurse and specialist in administration. She is a motivational speaker, and has addressed the Super Bowl the last five times in a row; she's received the title, "Cheerleader for Life" five times. The Senate was pleased to honor her with a special tribute on June 8. Her husband, Dr. Richard Zavodsky, is Treasurer of Huron Public Schools.



Junior ROTC legislation signed into law

A new Michigan law allows schools to count their Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps classes as instructional time. Senate Bill 77, now Public Act 41 of 2005, will waive the requirement that JROTC instructors have to be state certified in order for classes they teach to count towards instructional time. JROTC instructors, all of whom served in the military, are qualified to teach based on military standards. For years, this type of instruction has been considered as instructional time. This practice was recently challenged, leaving the future of some programs in jeopardy. The new law makes it easier for schools to continue offering JROTC classes.

Senate approves bill to allow safer, more efficient transportation of gasoline

Legislation approved recently by the Michigan Senate would make it easier for utilities to construct gasoline pipelines and other infrastructure, promoting safer, more efficient delivery to consumers. Senate Bill 522 would give the Michigan Public Service Commission the authority to allow public utilities to construct facilities along the right-of-way of federally-owned limited-access highways, while seeking input from local governments. Under the bill, local governments would not be able to arbitrarily hold up a project that has met all state requirements and approvals. The bill addresses issues raised in last year's Supreme Court decision in the case *City of Lansing v. the Michigan Public Service Commission and Wolverine Pipeline Company*. It would remove the roadblock preventing a proposed gas pipeline along the I-96 corridor outside Lansing. The proposed pipeline would ease the supply of gasoline to more than 39 counties in central and northern Michigan.

Incentives offered for new high-tech firms

The Michigan Senate this week passed legislation that offers incentives to new high technology start-up companies. The Senate Republican effort would help diversify Michigan's economy and promote job creation.

One part of the legislation would create tax incentives to "angel investors" or individuals who provide initial start-up funds for new firms. They get involved long before institutional investors

or venture capitalists get involved. During hearings on the legislation, one leader of a high-tech firm in Ann Arbor testified that too often new Michigan businesses are encouraged to leave the state by the venture-capital firms.

Another part would remove a disincentive new high-technology firms have when trying to grow and invest. Small technology companies would be exempted from fees based on the number of stock shares they authorized. Under existing laws, start-ups are hit with high fees — \$35,000 on 30 million authorized shares — at a time when few of the companies have cash. That disincentive encourages companies to locate in another state.

Sexual Predator law to be tightened up

In the wake of crimes in Florida and elsewhere, Sen. Patterson has offered a bill to more closely monitor those who have been convicted of sexual crimes against children. SB 607 will make amendments, adding requirements specifying a predator's residency, and penalties for violations of the law. It is expected that the bill will be approved by the Judiciary Committee this week and returned to the Senate floor for consideration.

Drug use could factor into child custody decisions

Judges could use a parent's substance abuse problem or substance abuse conviction when determining child custody under legislation introduced in the Senate. The bill would amend the Child Custody Act to add "controlled substance abuse or commission of a controlled substance offense" to the list of factors used in determining the best interests of a child in custody battles.

Northern Michigan Initiative

The Senate has been hard at work on legislation in the Northern Michigan Initiative package, which is designed to stimulate the economy in northern Michigan and provide incentives to attract tourism and travel in the region. Northern Michigan Initiative legislation recently passed by the Senate includes Senate Bill 398. This bill creates a "*Great Lakes Recreational Pass*" – a multi-state/federal agreement allowing individuals to purchase one pass to visit select parks and forest recreation areas throughout Michigan and neighboring states. The pass would emulate the "Northwest Pass" created by a partnership between Oregon, Washington and the National Park Service. Also passed was SB 415. It will require the Department of Natural Resources to enter into an agreement with other states to share information regarding certain snowmobile convictions.

Community Parades

Sen. Patterson has recently enjoyed taking part in community parades in Canton and Belleville, Grosse Île, Trenton, Plymouth, and Sumpter. These have seen great turn-outs, a chance to see good friends. He looks forward to parades on Independence Day, in Northville and Plymouth, and expects to reach Gibraltar by afternoon. "If I haven't seen you at one of these, I hope to see you soon. I'd be glad to have you join me. If you'd like to do this, please call my office, or Melissa McLaughlin, my District Director, at (734) 495-0304, or melsplace1@hotmail.com."

****REMEMBER:** **Be fireworks safe!* Enjoy the*Glorious Fourth* for a long time to come!*

“Poems For The Road” – Remember these?

A few more of those rhymes of yesteryear might enliven your summer road trips... You can share them with kids who won't remember the series of red and white sign boards we used to enjoy... Some were written, it is said, by Jessie W. Murton, sometime Michigan Poet Laureate.

AROUND THE CURVE
LICKETY-SPLIT!
BEAUTIFUL CAR ---
WASN'T IT?
Burma Shave

DROVE TOO LONG,
DRIVER SNOOZING.
WHAT HAPPENED NEXT
IS NOT AMUSING
Burma Shave

DON'T LOSE YOUR HEAD
TO GAIN A MINUTE.
YOU NEED YOUR HEAD --
YOUR BRAINS ARE IN IT
Burma Shave

TRAINS DON'T WANDER
ALL OVER THE MAP
'CAUSE NOBODY SITS
IN THE ENGINEER'S LAP
Burma Shave

Enjoy beautiful Michigan's gorgeous scenery this season – *safely!*

Contact Information

Thank you for your interest in our current state issues. If you would like to receive future updates via e-mail, please contact my office at < senbpatterson@senate.michigan.gov >. You can also visit me in my Lansing office at 505 Farnum Building, just across S. Capitol Avenue from the state Capitol; or you can send me mail at P. O. Box 30036, Lansing, MI 48909. Telephone (517) 373-7350 or (866) 262-7307; fax (517) 373-9228. I want to hear from you.

PS. The US Air Force Band will offer a free concert at your State Capitol on Saturday, July 9, at 7 p.m.